schemes for funding of NGOs. While there are programme specific requirements, the general eligibility conditions are as follows:

- The NGO must be registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 or similar statute;
- It should have been engaged for the last three years (after registration) in the activity for which financial assistance has been sought;
- The application of funding should be routed through the concerned State Govt./UT Administration.
- There are at times also conditions about availability of technical staff and related infrastructure.

(c) The allocation of funds for Voluntary organisations/NGOs made in the last three years is as per the table given below:

Rs. in lacs

1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
3193.61	5912.22	10194.23

(d) Total funds sanctioned to Voluntary Organisations in Tamil Nadu in the last three years cumulatively are to the tune of Rs. 1243.97 lacs.

(e) 229 proposals submitted by Voluntary Organisations/NGOs from all over the country are pending at present.

Insufficient Rakes in Calcutta Metro Rail

*294. SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item titled "Atankes Patal Yatra" which appeared in Ananda Bazar Patrika dated 12th October, 1999, regarding Calcutta Metro Rail;

(b) if so, Government's reaction with regard to the reported comment of the Chief Operations Manager that there had been insufficient number of rakes during the last eight-nine months;

(c) the number of rakes in operation, as on date; and

(d) the immediate, short-term, long-term, time-bound action plan to increase the number of rakes in the Metro Railway and ensure sustained safe operation in Metro rail in the light of the aforesaid report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d): Yes, Sir. In the past there had been a shortage of rakes mainly due to non-availability of spares for maintenance and replacement purposes from original equipment manufacturers. With the development of new sources for spares, presently adequate number of rakes are being provided to run time-tabled services.

Frequent cancellation and dislocation of services has come down significantly in the last two months. The passenger occupation has also been picking up. A Website has been recently created for Metro Railways' working, which has been receiving encouraging responses.

The number of incidents of equipment failure, smoke and fire on trains have also come down significantly. To ensure safety and reliability of operations the following short term and long term measures have been planned.

Short term action plan:

- Strengthening the maintenance practices and spares procurements.
- Strengthening work culture by training of staff and development of cadre for Metro.
- Developing indigenous sources for critical items.
- Building up unit exchange spares.

Long term action plan:

- Commissioning of two rakes by re-equipping.
- Procurement of additional rakes on account of extension of Calcutta Metro system from Tollygunge to Garia.